

WESTERN UNION
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INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

26456

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Action 00 RUEHCR
L DE RUEHLL 001C 2131045
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Info O P 011030Z ZEA

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
SS TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 14781
G INFO ZEN/AMCONSUL AMSTERDAM PRIORITY FOUR
AF RUFHPA/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY THREE
EUR RUFHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY 30
P RUFHOL/AMCONSUL FRANKFURT PRIORITY SIX
USIA ZEN/AMEMBASSY THEHAGUE PRIORITY 12
NSC RUFHOL/AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY SIX
INR RUFHPA/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 86
CIA ZEN/AMEMBASSY VALLETTA PRIORITY TWO
BT STATE GRNC

DOD

E LIMITED OFFICIAL USE AUGUST ONE

MC DEPT FOR NEUMAN L/AF

SCA MUNITIONS FLIGHT

FAA AS EXPECTED, LONDON SUNDAY TIMES, AUGUST 1, CARRIES HALF-PAGE
FBI STORY TITLED "BREAKDOWN OF A FREELANCE GUN-RUNNING OPERATION."
RSR ARTICLE DESCRIBES IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL ATTEMPT CARRY ARMS
FROM PRAGUE TO ALGERIA WHICH ABORTED IN MALTA LAST FEBRUARY.
IT NAMES PICKETT, BEN DREW AND BERGER AS AMERICANS INVOLVED
AND IDENTIFIES RIBA AS ARGENTINIAN. DEAL IS TRACED TO

PAGE 2 RUEHLL 201C

BONTE AND STARKMAN AND ON TO OAS FOR FINANCIAL BACKING.

BULK OF ARTICLE DESCRIBES IN DETAIL PRAGUE-ALGERIA-MALTO
OPERATION. SAYS DUTCH SECURITY CIRCLES MAINTAIN INFORMATION
ABOUT FLIGHT WAS PASSED TO AMERICANS BEFOREHAND, BUT INFO
APPARENTLY FAILED TO GET THROUGH TO APPROPRIATE AGENCIES.
ARTICLE ALSO SUGGESTS THAT "THERE IS FAR TOO LITTLE CON-
SULTATION" AMONG VARIOUS NATIONS ABOUT SUCH OPERATIONS.
DREW IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH CIVIL AIRLINE IN VIET-
NAM INVOLVED IN CIA OPERATIONS, BUT HE IS QUOTED AS HAVING
SAID HE WAS FIRED BY CIA. ARTICLE ENDS WITH QUESTION WHETHER
PLAN TO TAKE ARMS OUT OF PRAGUE IS STILL WORKABLE PROPOSITION.

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2 AUG
1965

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RF

DCI

D/DCI

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D/P

ADDP

1965 AUG 1 AM 7 00

DCI (MELIN)

ESRF

DDI

OC/UK2

OC/EEC

OC/AA/AF2

ONE

ORR2

FBI5

HR/OPS

WE

EE-2

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C12

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DO

SID3

DD/HS

FININT

OGC

BPA

48

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-2- 38, August 1, from London

COMMENT: ARTICLE IS UNSENSATIONAL AND LEAVES IMPRESSION BUNCH OF BUNGLING ADVENTURERS OF VARIOUS NATIONALITIES GOT INVOLVED FOR FINANCIAL RATHER THAN POLITICAL REASONS. ALTHOUGH NOTHING IS SAID TO SUGGEST USG ATTEMPTED REMOVE AMERICANS FROM OPERATION, NEITHER IS THERE ANY IMPLICATION THAT USG WAS IN ANY WAY INVOLVED.

BRUCE

BT

NOTE: Advance copy to S/S-O at 7:05 a.m., August 1, 1965

NOTE: Passed White House at 7:10 a.m., August 1, 1965

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